

# GREENACRES

Childcare at its best

## **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY**

### **Mission/Vision Statement**

*Greenacres is committed to providing equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory Practice for all staff, children and families in accordance with the Equality Act (2010). We aim to provide a positive and loving learning environment free from prejudice, discrimination and fear, in which all staff, children and their families feel accepted, respected and valued. We believe that all at Greenacres should be given every opportunity to fully appreciate their potential and should be able to enjoy, play and learn together without feelings of being excluded or disadvantaged for any reason. This statement ensures that all at Greenacres despite the 'Protective characteristics' of the Equality Act (2010), are encouraged to achieve this.*

### **Protective characteristics**

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnerships
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

### **Aims**

We aim to:

- Recognise that all children are different and aim to identify how best to support each child and family.
- Value the contributions that all children and their families can bring.
- Actively promote anti-discriminatory practice to build an inclusive environment where every child can fulfil their potential.
- Continually reflect on our practice and increase our knowledge around equalities issues.
- Provide an inclusive environment recognising that as individuals, children and adults alike all require some form of support. However, we recognise that for some this may be specific and sometimes require the help of outside agencies.
- Adhere to relevant legislation to ensure equality in the service we provide.

## **Employment**

- Greenacres strives to find the best candidate for every job vacancy regardless of any of the 'protective characteristics'
- Positions are advertised widely in the local community.
- All applicants are assessed against the same criteria.
- Each position is offered to the applicant who best meets the criteria for the post.
- As our work with children requires staff to undertake a DBS, we would encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us, this will depend upon the nature of the offence and when it occurred. We will take guidance from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and from Ofsted when making an employment decision. We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.
- We follow the DBS Code of Practice when handling and storing all confidential information.

## **Staff**

- Greenacres is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of any of the 'protective characteristics'.
- We have a nominated Equalities representative who leads and promotes good practice in our setting according to our Equality and Diversity Policy.
- All staff members have knowledge of our Equality and Diversity Policy and share the responsibility of ensuring that we provide a fully inclusive service for children and their parents/carers and families. They recognise the importance of their role in promoting equality and challenging discrimination.
- We seek out ongoing training/professional development opportunities for staff to enable them to keep up to date with new developments, current research and appropriate practice. This information is stored in our Continuing Professional Development file (CPD) situated in the nursery office.

## **Admissions**

- Our nursery is open to all members of the community.
- We advertise our services widely and aim for the families that use our setting to reflect the cultural diversity of our community.
- We base our admissions policy on a fair system; we never discriminate against a child or their family, or prevent entry to our setting, on the basis of race, religion, home language, family background, gender or disability and/or learning difficulty.
- Through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS) we can offer a translator for parents/ carers who have English as a second language.
- We gather full and accurate information about all children before they start to ensure that we can meet their needs to the best of our ability.

## **Environment and Resources**

- We aim to provide a secure environment in which all children can flourish and in which all contributions are valued.
- We provide resources that give a balanced view of the world and an appreciation of the rich diversity of our society.
- We encourage children through play equipment and activities that explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others.
- Our physical resources take into account children's size, height and physical needs, e.g. we have child-sized tables and chairs and sinks at their level.
- We use Makaton signing throughout the setting and visual timetables to support children's communication, including children with English as an additional language (EAL).
- We work with professionals from outside agencies to provide a multi-agency network of support for children and their families e.g. Early Years Consultants (EYC), Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS) Speech and Language Therapists and local and community health services, to ensure that the best care and learning opportunities are available for individual children.

## **The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework**

- We ensure that all children have the opportunity to experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.
- We respect each child's personal learning journey and encourage each child to recognise their own unique qualities and characteristics.
- We provide activities and experiences for the children which celebrate diversity.
- Our observation, assessment and planning process allows for the key person to plan for each child's individual needs.
- We work within the EYFS Framework to provide activities and experiences for each child which are appropriate to their age, stages of development and levels of understanding.
- We differentiate activities and experiences to suit children's individual needs to ensure that all children can participate in them, including children with Special Educational Needs (see Special Educational Needs Policy for further details)
- We plan opportunities that build on and extend all children's knowledge, experiences, interests and skills and develop their self-esteem and confidence in their ability to learn.

## **Inclusion**

We at Greenacres have regard of the DfEE Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of SEN and Equality Act (2010). All staff members share the responsibility of ensuring that we provide a fully inclusive service for children and their parents/carers and families

- All staff members share the responsibility of ensuring that we provide a fully inclusive service for children and their parents/carers and families.
- When starting at Greenacres all children are appointed a Key Person who will liaise with parents/carers and families to identify children's individual needs and requirements to, ensure that we are providing a fully inclusive service for each and every child, and make 'reasonable adjustments' where possible.

- We will identify and make 'reasonable adjustments', provide additional resources and support for individual children, where needed.
- We aim to be fully aware of special arrangements that may be necessary to ensure that children with disabilities or learning difficulties are fully included in all activities planned for children.
- Staff will make arrangements to include all children on outings, taking into account individual/ special needs e.g. one to one care for the duration of the outing.

### **Working with Parents and Carers**

- We aim to include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity.
- We ensure that our parents/ carers have access to our Equality and Diversity policy by making it available on our website and by making sure that the Parent Policies and Procedures folder is available at all times.
- We value the contribution that parents can make to the setting and aim to make all parents feel welcome to share in the daily life of the nursery.
- We provide 'Children's Interests' sheets to parents monthly to further encourage links between home and nursery.
- We encourage parents/carers to become actively involved in the life of the nursery, for example assisting on outings, providing resources and leading/assisting activities for the children.

### **Discriminatory remarks or Behaviour**

- We take all incidents of discrimination very seriously and aim to challenge overt prejudice and discrimination when it occurs in a way that is sensitive and constructive.
- As a staff team we aim to recognise and examine our own beliefs and prejudices in relation to our own practice.
- We would fully support any child, member of staff or parent who encountered discrimination or harassment in a sensitive and constructive manner.

### **Action to be taken in case of discrimination**

1. Any concerns of discrimination should be reported to the manager in the first Instance. The concern may be raised to the proprietor if special conditions exist.
2. The management team will consider whether discrimination has occurred and agree on appropriate actions and response. The response will be made in writing to the person raising the concern. Actions will be implemented and monitored as appropriate. A report will be produced detailing the incident and recording any actions or outcome, and where appropriate other agencies will be informed.

### **Role of the SENCo**

- Our SENCo officer is \_\_\_\_\_
- The SENCo officer is the designated member of staff who will act as a link with parents' and outside agencies i.e Portage, Speech and Language Therapy, Educational Psychologist.

- They will facilitate the day to day running of the policy, ensuring all necessary equipment or measures are taken for children with additional needs to be fully included within the setting.
- They will ensure that all staff are kept up to date on current legislation and will pass on all information and training that is accessed by him/her.
- They will be in charge of collecting any information, observations and advice from outside professionals regarding children with additional needs in our setting.

### **Implementation**

- All children will be admitted according to our admissions policy.
- The 'Early Years Foundation Stage' documents are Greenacres 'starting point' for planning ways to meet the specific needs of the children. Within our setting we ensure that all children's progress is monitored through observations and this is recorded into the children's individual profile.
- Where a child significantly exceeds their expected level of attainment, our staff may use material more suitable for him/her to extend opportunities for which that shows aptitude.
- If we feel that a child is not developing or making progress we will discuss this with the parents firstly and with their permission may bring in outside agencies for help, where necessary.
- We recognise that parents may have concerns regarding their child's progress, their views and concerns will be listened to and acted upon, in strict confidentiality.
- If specialist help, resources or equipment are required to aid the inclusion of a child, a meeting will be arranged prior to the child's start to discuss the 'reasonable adjustments' with parents and relevant professionals on what will be required, and where possible made.
- We welcome other professionals into our setting to work with us and supported children.

### **Confidentiality**

- ALL INFORMATION IS KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL AND STORED IN A SECURED PLACE

### **Monitoring and Reviewing the Policy:**

- The effectiveness of this policy is monitored by the Equalities Representative and the management team of the setting.
- This policy will be reviewed annually or as and when required.
- Views of the whole staff team and parents/ carers are taken into consideration when reviewing the policy.